2008-03063/

EDMONTON

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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

EDMONTON 2007
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City appeals Privacy Commissioner pawnshop decision

Edmonton, April 1, 2008 – The City of Edmonton will seek a judicial review of the February 18 decision of the Office of the Privacy Commissioner regarding the collection of personal information by pawn shops and second-hand stores.

City Administration is concerned about the decision's impact on the City's ability to enact future bylaws for consumer protection and its responsibility for information held by third parties.

"The Commissioner's decision restricts the ability of municipalities to regulate the collection of information for consumer protection," explains Steve Thompson, Acting City Clerk. "The Municipal Government Act says that City Council has the authority to pass a bylaw like the one the Edmonton Police Service has been working under. We need further clarification."

Thompson also explains that the City does not believe it has custody and control of the personal information collected by pawn shops, contrary to the Commissioner's ruling. In fact, no one in the City Administration has any access to that information.

The City is advising store owners to continue to collect information from clients while the judicial review is in process.

The Edmonton Police Service is also seeking a judicial review, but on grounds related to investigative requirements.

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About Edmonton:
This is a city alive with energy and boundless opportunity - a growing economic powerhouse where business thrives and more than a million lives enjoy the freedom to explore, experiment, experience, excel and expect the most out of every day. A place like no other, Edmonton is filled with surprises great and small and a calendar packed with artistic, sporting, theatrical and cultural celebration.

For more information on Edmonton, please visit our website at: www.edmonton.ca.

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THE CITY OF Edmonton